



NANCY GRAY ART CONSULTING

Fine Art Appraisal

Realizing Your Dreams Through Art!

Planning - taken from “The Pitfalls of Planning” by Arlene Goldbard, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

Things to remember about planning:

1. Planning is the developing self-knowledge and self-examination.
2. Planning must be thought out in order to avoid emergencies or crisis, the process is everything.
3. Everything depends on everything else.
4. The whole organization must be included in any attempt at organizational thinking.
 - Real work of planning can be only done by the organization’s artistic and administration groups, peers or whoever else the leadership deems necessary to the process. A consultant must only be the facilitator.
 - Behind the scenes of a well orchestrated event or public execution of art is a lot of duct tape and sweat.
 - Planning is more useful way to plan than duct tape.
 - Much like fire, which holds enormous latent value – what to do with it determines its value.

Planning cannot guarantee the outcome you want. Instead, it can help you achieve something integral to any future success: readiness to face the challenges that chance presents –RULE # 1: know what you are up against.

Planning is only as good as the information on which it is based.

Solving problems can be facilitated by discarding the obvious.

- Avoid the untested assumptions or hunches “just knows” and the “it’s obvious”.
- It’s the obvious things that everyone just knows that are most likely to trip you up.
 - Find out what others have done to address the same issue
 - What was the outcome? What could be improved upon?
 - Worth the extra time to test assumptions and hunches against reality.

Planning is not magic; you cannot always get what you want.

- The process of planning is one of research and investigation.



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- What readiness by the organization is needed for the major expansion that is planned?
- Is there a need for the new activity?
- Is there an audience or constituency – a market?
- Do you have access to the expertise?
- What are the material resources needed?
 - Do you have them?
 - Does your organization have the time required to do it right?
- Planning is a tool that can help you decide whether to go forward, not just how.
 - If the answers to key questions are “no,” then the outcome of planning should be to postpone the contemplated expansion, work toward readiness to tackle it further down the road.

Adaptable beats obdurate (hard, obstinate, callous, unbending, inflexible), anytime.

- Organizations are like all life-forms, their choices are to continually adapt or die. Rather than planning as if the future were pre-determined, plan for flexibility.
- Plans that can't be changed shouldn't be written.

Put planning in its place and time.

- It takes time and effort to plan well.
- Need to be willing to make the investment.
- Be realistic about what you can invest.
- Find a way to plan that suits your available resources – time, energy, money.

Too much of a good thing: Planning can become a substitute for action.

- Sometimes it has been easier to obtain support for planning than for programming.
- It's a bad sign when an organization is always having retreats to figure out who they are.
 - There is more to achieving the goal than just talking about it.

What goes around, come around: groups can be blindsided by the issues that planning reveals.

- When an organization pauses to plan, what's been submerged may come up for air.



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- When an organization undertakes to plan, everyone should be made aware that issues may arise that need talking through, that there may be moments of heat, struggle, even head-collision.
- Your planning process should include the time, focus, and talent for the mediation needed to resolve such conflicts, so you can turn to face the future as a team.

Boilerplates and cookie-cutters are the wrong tools for this job.

- Avoid the “model” approach
 - Other organization’s experiences are relevant to your own. Even a broken clock is right twice a day.
 - Organizations are as complex and diverse as their individual members and they deserve to find their won paths rather than being pulsed through and organizational assembly-line.
 - In planning insist on your right to march to a different drummer.

Writing it up in “plan-speak” rather than plain language undoes the good of planning.

- Planning documents that are vague, abstract, and general, are useless to the people who invested so much in them.
- As time goes by the memory of the face-to-face experience fades, the planning document’s generalities are drained of any meaning that might once have clung to them.
- If you are going to take the time to plan, do it right: Talk through alternative scenarios for realizing your aims; map out way to test them; be concrete about guiding values, deadlines, ways to evaluate your experiments.
- Put enough flesh on the bare bones of your plans to keep the document alive and kicking.
- **The point of planning is not to be right, but to be ready.**